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CITY COUNCIL BRIEFS

On ice

Farmington Hills City Council members approved a \$26,045 bid Monday for construction of an ice/roller skating rink at Olde Town Park.

The rink will be installed by Staley Asphalt, in an area that was once used as a ballfield. An old backdrop will be removed, and the rink will be configured around existing trees.

The project originated with a suggestion made at a homeowners' meeting several years ago.

Camp addition

A cooperative effort between the city and Farmington School District could result in a \$450,000 nature center addition to the Heritage Park Day Camp.

City officials approved an application Monday for a

\$250,000 grant from the Department of Natural Resources, to match the \$100,000 each local body would contribute. Director of Special Services Dave Joyer said development of a nature center ranked high in priority on the last two Parks and Recreation master plans, as well as resident surveys.

The partnership between the city and schools extends not only to planning and finance, but also programming the facility. The 2,325 square feet of first-floor space would house displays, and could be used for workshops and lectures. Special services would use the 2,000-square-foot basement for storage.

The city would staff the center during open hours, and the school district would provide staff for its own programs, Joyer said.

Grant awards should be made some time in July, and if this application isn't successful, it will be resubmitted during the second round in August.

Attracting business

City officials approved an economic development plan Monday that will help make the best use of limited funds available to attract and retain business and industry.

Tefi Arbenowake, assistant to City Manager Steve Brock, said a strong commercial base (currently 36 percent of all taxable property) keeps taxes low for residential property owners. Because Farmington Hills is 95 percent developed, the plan focuses primarily on keeping businesses and helping them expand.

To accomplish those goals, the

plan suggests strategies like improving economic development services by creating a "one stop shop" for development information at city hall, assigning one contact person for each project and keeping the business community informed of the available in and outside the city.

Incentives could be offered to redevelop older commercial and industrial areas of the city, because that process is often more expensive than building on vacant land. Redevelopment strategies include a business loan program, discussing a revolving loan program with the Economic Development Commission and using various tax increment financing options, which allow the city to capture tax dollars and offer development incentives.

MILITARY NEWS

Bryan Yheulon, son of Ruth and Mark Yheulon, enlisted in the Air Force's Delayed Entry Program in March.

Yheulon, a 2000 graduate of Farmington Harrison High School, is scheduled for enlist-

ment in the Regular Air Force on Jan. 3, 2001.

Upon graduation from the Air Force's six-week basic training course in San Antonio, Texas, he is scheduled to receive technical training.

He will earn credits toward an associate degree in applied science through the Community College of the Air Force while attending basic and technical training schools.

CHAMBER NOTE

The Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce and William Tyndale College present a Chamber Morning Connection 9-2 a.m. Thursday, April 6 at William Tyndale College, 35700 12 Mile.

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